

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-12 were examined and reported in the Office Action. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8-12 are rejected. Claims 4 and 7 are objected to. Claims 3, 5 and 7 are canceled. Claims 1, 4 and 6 are amended. Claims 1, 4, 6 and 8-12 remain.

Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 1, 3, 5-6 and 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5667418, issued to Fahlen et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6624589, issued to Kitamura et al.

However, the Examiner has indicated that claims 4 and 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 5 and 7 which have been canceled. Since Claim 7 originally depended from claim 5 and claim 5 originally depended from claim 1, amended claim 1 is claim 7 rewritten in independent form including all other limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 4 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 3 which has been canceled. Since Claim 4 originally depended from claim 3 and claim 3 originally depended from claim 1, amended claim 4 is claim 3 rewritten in independent form including all other limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections for claims 1, 3, 5-6 and 8-12 are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely Claims 1, 4, 6, and 8-12, patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

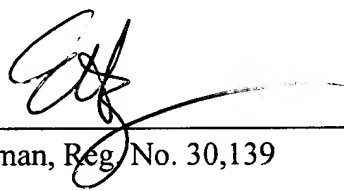
If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR, & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated:

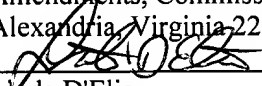
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendments, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on April 14, 2005


Linda D'Elia

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